WILD FLOWERS.

Oh, beautiful blossoms, pure and sweet,
Agleam with dew from the country ways,
To me, at work in a city street,
You bring fair visions of bygone days—
Glad days, when I hid in a mist of green
To watch spring's delicate buds unfold,
And all the riches I cared to glean
Were daisy silver and buttercup gold.

'Tis true you come of a lowly race,
Nursed by the sunshine, fed by the showers,
And yet you are heirs to a nameless grace
Which I fail to find in my hothouse flowers.
And you breathe on me with your honeyed lips,
Till in thought I stand on the wind swept fells,
Where the brown bees hum o'er the ferny dips,
Or ring faint peals on the heather bells.

I close my eyes on the crowded street,
I shut my ears to the city's roar,
And am out in the open with flying feet—
Off, off to your emerald haunts once more!
But the harsh wheels grate on the stones below,
And a sparrow chirps at the murky pane,
And my bright dreams fade in an overflow
Of passionate longing and tender pain.

—E. Matheson in Chambers' Journal.

A STATELY OLD MANSION.

The Home of Sarah Orne Jewett, the Novelist, at Berwick, Me.

I wonder if there is another such house in New England as the home of Sarah Orne Jewett, says a writer in the Boston Herald. I have seen many stately mansions that go back to the days before the Revolution — one in particular where General Gage was quartered in old Danvers, a town which is linked by witch threads to Berwick, and one with gambrel roof upon which a good dame and her cronies climbed to be out of reach of husbandly authority while they drank tea forbidden to patriots until the tax was removed—but I have never seen a living place at once so modern and so reminiscent of 1730 or days younger still. In its great rooms filled with old mahogany and warmed by huge tiled fireplaces it would be easy to forget that the gundalows, with their high peaked sails like great birds' wings, do not yet sail down the river from the landing wharves in fleets of tens and twenties to Portsmouth, with their loads of pine planks and boards to be exchanged for East Indian rum, tobacco and molasses or for Russian iron, duck or cordage, or for such priceless old glass and silver and china as came from unknown ports and now peep out wonderingly upon nineteenth century cushions and pictures and bric-a-brac, from their deep-set cupboards and shelves.

"I found these things here," Miss Jewett says, "and I hope to leave them when I go into the unknown." If one had one's choice of ancestors, it would be impossible to pick out better than those who chose the elaborate cornices, all carved by hand with infinite pains, and the high paneling of the parlors, and the broad window sills, and the flowered wall paper, still bright and fresh, though of a pattern on which Marie Antoinette might have set the seal of her approval when she fitted up the little Trianon.

Tawdry is derived from St. Audrey. In the early middle ages fairs were held in France and England on St. Audrey's day, and these annual gatherings became noted for the gaudy and worthless jewelry sold at them.

If the mind, that rules the body, ever so far forgets itself as to trample on its slave, the slave is never generous enough to forgive the injury, but will rise and smite the oppressor.—Longfellow.

A witty Frenchman said, "Only death is an excuse for not keeping a dinner engagement, and even then a polite man would send the undertaker to apologize for him."

SUMMER SONG.

Sing me a song of the summer time,
Of the fire in the sorrel and ruby clover,
Where the garrulous bobolinks lilt and chime,
Over and over.

Sing me a song of the strawberry bent,
Of the black cap hiding the heap of stones,
Of the milkweed drowsy with sultry scent
Where the bee drones.

Sing me a song of the spring head still,
Of the dewy fern in the solitude,
Of the hermit thrush and the whippoorwill
Haunting the wood.

Sing me a song of the gleaming scythe,
Of the scented hay in the buried wain,
Of the mowers whistling bright and blithe
In the sunny rain.

Sing me a song of the quince and the gage,
Of the apricot by the orchard wall,
Where bends my love Armitage,
Gathering the fruit of the windfall.

Sing me a song of the rustling, slow
Sway of the wheat as the winds croon,
Of the golden disk and the dreaming glow
Of the harvest moon.

—Duncan Campbell Scott in Scribner's.

A HOLIDAY TRAGEDY.

All my life I have been—well, not exactly a woman hater, but a firm believer in the idea that man is the lord of creation, and that woman is not an absolute necessity. For many years it was my proud boast that I was able to dispense with feminine aid and yet live a very enjoyable life, as, with clockwork regularity, I went from my bachelor lodgings to business each morning, returning in the afternoon and spending the evening at the club or some place of amusement. The idea of having a lady companion in my rambles never entered my head.

True, my landlady—good old soul—prepared my meals and cleaned my rooms, but that was because I had not time to do it myself, and a manservant was beyond my means. But in all else I dispensed with woman's aid. Boot cleaning, sewing buttons on, lighting the fire, etc., were all done with my own hands—nay, at a pinch I have even washed a pocket handkerchief.

I desired to stand forth as a living example of the original Adam and a proof of the superfluity of the modern Eve. But my misguided companions refused to profit by my teachings or to follow my example. One by one they fell under female influence, one by one they married, and then—I cut them dead. Ah, me, those free bohemian days were happy ones, as year after year I pursued my adopted course in spite of the continual falling off of my comrades. Then came a time when my circle of acquaintances had decreased so considerably that I began to feel lonely. Bachelor chums were more difficult to find than ever. To loneliness succeeded melancholy, and I grew miserable and pessimistic.

One friend, to whom I laid bare my woes, said:

"You keep to yourself too much. What you ought to do is to lodge with some family where there are two or three grown up daughters. They would wake you up a bit."

This, to me, the hitherto ideal advocate of an Eveless Eden! And yet, after the advice had been tendered several times, I began to think that such a change might be beneficial. Such a course need not involve the rendering up of my tenets; but, as woman still formed a part of the world, she might at least contribute to my amusement. So, after very serious consideration, I decided to seek fresh apartments, with light society thrown in.

Now my troubles commenced. I could not make the direct inquiry, "Have you any grown up daughters." So I generally viewed the rooms, listening to the landlady's verbiage, settled the rent, and then casually asked, "Have you any children?" and the reply would be: "Yes, 'four,' 'five,' or 'six'" (as the case might be); "the eldest is 10 years old and the youngest two months. But they are as good as gold and never make a bit of noise."

The numberless journeys I made and the many desultory conversations I listened to were all to no purpose. No one appeared to possess grown up daughters—the eldest was always 10. Just when I was about to abandon my search, fortune—or was it fate?—led me to Myrtle Villa, Paradise gardens, Upper Dulwich. The door was opened by a vision of loveliness, faultlessly dressed, and with bright blue eyes and golden hair. "Newly married," thought I. "Well, here at least the eldest won't be ten!" She invited me in, and then disappeared, a middle aged lady entering directly after. We proceeded to discuss terms. Then came the inevitable inquiry as to children.

"I have two grown up daughters, the younger of whom opened the door to you."

At last! Need I say that, within a week, I was installed in Myrtle Villa? The landlady, a widow, was a genial, homely woman, and the youngest daughter, Annie, aged 25, I have already described, but the other daughter, Julia, did not impress me favorably. She was neither good looking nor pleasing, and, without being exactly bad tempered, always insisted upon having her own way.

I now seemed to be in a new world. My boots bore a brilliant luster each morning without my aid, and my slippers were laid ready for me in the evening, and as for lending me a needle and cotton—the idea!—if I would only leave them outside, they would only be too happy.

I no longer needed to seek relaxation at the club after the labors of the day. Julia played the piano well, her only accomplishment, while Annie sang divinely, and thus the evenings passed all too quickly. Male acquaintances they did not seem to possess. Yet, stay, there was one—a Mr. Malcolm, whose name I frequently heard mentioned, but as his calls were always made in the daytime I never saw him. I had rapidly passed into that condition of mind which raised a feeling of jealousy on his account, so one day I questioned my landlady on the subject.

"Oh, he's a very old friend of ours. Once we thought he would have proposed to Julia, but nothing came of it."

So time went pleasantly on, and then—how can I confess it?—my lifelong creed was thrown to the winds, my proud ambition humbled in the dust, and I became a willing slave to the sex I had so long despised and ignored. My only thought now was how and in what words I should beseech my darling Annie to become my wife. Time after time I was on the point of speaking, but Julia always turned up at the critical moment.

One evening Julia announced that a week thence she had an engagement to play at a concert. Then burst upon me a brilliant inspiration. I purchased two stall tickets for the Lyceum for that same evening, and making pretense that I had had them given to me I persuaded Annie to promise to accompany me. This time Julia would not be able to intrude, and I should know my fate. In two months' time I should be taking my summer holiday, which would fit in just nicely for the honeymoon.

On the eventful day I hastened homeward with a queer fluttering in my heart and a flower spray for Annie in my hat. Julia opened the door, and hardly permitted me to enter before she informed me that Annie had been out in the hot sun and had been obliged to go to bed with a very bad sick headache. My fluttering heart gave one huge bound and then seemed to stand still. However, to disguise my feelings, I said:

"I am sorry, and you have to play at the concert?"

"No," she replied, "the concert has been postponed."

"Then may I beg the pleasure of your company? I did not ask you before because of the concert engagement."

"Thanks! I shall enjoy it immensely."

What a miserable failure that evening proved to be! I do not even know what the play was called. I was thinking all the time of my poor, sick darling, and not of the acting or the woman who sat by my side wearing the flower spray that was meant for Annie.

The words were still unspoken when my holidays arrived, and tearing myself away from the two sisters who stood at the gate and waved their handkerchiefs as long as I remained in sight it was with no feelings of joyful anticipation that I betook myself to Hastings for rest and recreation.

Rest! Where could I find it? Not on the parade or pier amid hundreds of couples promenading, as I had pictured Annie and myself doing; not on the beach, where the Ethiopian musicians were eternally playing "Annie Laurie," "Sweet Annie Rooney," and "Annie, Dear, I'm Called Away." For a whole week I wandered aimlessly hither and thither. Then I could stand it no longer. So I wrote a long letter commencing "Darling," and pouring out the impassioned, pent up love that comes but once in a man's lifetime, I besought and beseeched her to take pity upon me, or my lifeless body should surge in the billows that beat relentlessly on the rocks of Beachy head.

When I had finished, I happened to catch sight of a photograph which I had purchased the previous day, representing one of the yachts preparing to start on her morning trip, with my own figure in a prominent position in the bow. "Ah," thought I, "I'll send that to Julia."

If it were possible I had now less rest than before, night or day, while waiting for the answer. Rising in the morning with haggard looks and burning brow, the other boarders would remark that the sea air did not seem to agree with me, while under the mask of assumed indifference there raged within me the fiercest volcano that ever burned in the heart of man.

At last the reply came, and, bounding up to the privacy of my own room, with trembling fingers I tore open the envelope which hid from me—life or death?

"Dearest, I am yours forever. I cannot say your proposal was unexpected, for I have felt that you could mean nothing less ever since that evening when you so openly expressed your preference by taking me to the theater"—

What, whew, where! I looked at the signature, "Julia." Oh, heavens, I saw it all! I had placed them in the wrong envelopes and sent the letter to Julia and the photograph to Annie! How I raged and fumed and tore my hair, until at last, in sheer exhaustion, I sank into a chair and endeavored to finish reading the letter.

"Annie thanks you very much for the photo, and she desires me to tell you that yesterday Mr. Malcolm proposed to her and was accepted. We will have the two weddings on the same day. Won't that be nice, dear?"

Nice! This was the last straw. Nice indeed for me to be married to a woman I did not care for, and at the same time to see the one I loved given to another man. I cannot remember what I did for the next hour or two beyond cursing my foolishness and swearing I wouldn't marry Julia. Then, when I became calmer, I saw an action for breach of promise looming. I thought of all my hard earned savings of years being swept away by a sympathetic jury to heal Julia's broken heart. There was no escape for me. She had my letter, which simply commenced "Darling," and as no name was mentioned in it from beginning to end was it possible that any body of intelligent men could be brought to believe that I intended it for Annie when I addressed the envelope to Julia? No, no! I must go through with it. I would marry Julia. Yes, and I would teach her that man is the lord of creation, and that woman is but a helpmate and not an equal, and so, in my married life, triumphantly assert those principles which I had held so long.

* * * * * *

Julia married me at the same time and place as Annie became Mrs. Malcolm. I now spend my evenings endeavoring to solve a difficult problem, and that is, Why do they call woman the weaker sex?—London Tit-Bits.

A MAN OF RESOURCES.

This Dentist Was Willing to Accommodate His Patron.

The dentist didn't want to talk shop, he said, but he thought the story worth telling, so he told it. "Not long ago," he said, "a western railroad president came to New York, and one evening was invited to dine with some of his friends here. The dinner was a particularly jolly affair, and when the western man reached his hotel he was in a merry mood. It was his custom to place his set of false teeth under the pillow every night just before going to bed, and he was certain he had done so on this particular evening. Nevertheless in the morning he was unable to find them. Searching high and low in the room was of no avail, and finally he came to me for a new set.

"'How long will it take you to make them?' he asked. I told him four or five days. 'Can't listen to anything like that,' he replied. 'I'll give you triple money to make them in 24 hours.' You see people from Chicago think that money laughs at everything, even time.

"All my arguing with the old fellow did no good, so I set to work on his teeth. In the meantime, however, I told my assistant to hasten around to the old man's hotel and make a scientific search of his room. The westerner insisted that he had drunk no more wine than usual at the dinner, but I was satisfied that he was deceiving himself. I had not been long at the preliminary measurements when my assistant called me out and handed me the teeth. He had found them in the pillowcase, where the owner had put them instead of under the pillow.

"I returned the teeth and the railroad man was so overjoyed that he did not cancel the order, but told me to go ahead with the teeth. They might come in handy some time, he said. He even unbent so far as to admit that perhaps, after all, he had drunk a glass of wine too much the night before, and when I sent him my bill I received a check for double the amount from him."—New York Tribune.

THE BARBER'S REVENGE.

A Tale of a Talkative Tonsorial Artist and His Gruff Customer.

As he threw himself back into the embrace of the cushioned chair of a Union square barber shop he scowled fiercely at the barber and buried his face in the newspaper. But the barber didn't mind the ugly opening. He leaned over, garroted the tonsorial patient with a towel and painted his face with lather. When he had flipflapped a razor once or twice along the strop he began mildly:

"Nice day, sir."

"Oh, is it?" answered the other.

The barber looked startled, but he tried again.

"Paper says we're going to have nice weather now."

"Thanks," was the answer, "I know how to read myself."

At this rebuff the barber kept silence. But he shaved against the grain, tweaked the other's nose and daubed soap into the corner of his mouth. The gruff man swore softly, the barber smiled, and as a final act of violence grabbed the other by the top of the scalp and twisted his head until the cervical vertebræ creaked again.

"Say," cried the gruff man, "my head ain't no roulette wheel."

But still the barber shaved on in silence. He shaved and shaved, scraping the skin so close that it showed ragged under the blade. Then, leaning over, he grabbed a handful of raw and tender skin and rolled it between his fingers until the other groaned aloud. As the tear drops stole down the scarified face the barber administered the final taunt:

"Do you shave yourself, sir?"

"No," roared the gruff man, leaping up in the chair, "I shave my grandmother and sister's nieces."

Then he buried his face in the paper and the barber smiled and smiled and smiled, while he rubbed alum into the sore spots on the victim's chin.

Water Wheels.

The point is made by a writer in one of the mechanical journals that the greatest obstacle now encountered in the successful operation of water wheels is, from an economical aspect, the too often entire absence of engineering skill in utilizing the power, and that many a water power would develop greater efficiency were it properly controlled and had the turbine been selected because of its adaptability to the conditions and been properly set. On their introduction, he remarks, turbines were used singly, but now they are used either singly or in sets of two or three or more, as expedient, and in batteries of sets; by the use, too, of iron or steel penstocks and feed pipes the expense of installing has been largely reduced and far greater economy in the use of water secured; the growing demand for large units of power has also been satisfied, so that whereas a few years back a 500 horsepower turbine was almost unheard of, turbines of 5,000 horsepower are now employed.

A DELAYED BRIDE.

She Wouldn't Be Wedded Till the Conditions Were All Right.

The company waited, but the bride was not ready. A bridesmaid was sent to notify her that George Edward was in the oriel room and the band under the stairs waiting to strike up the first strains of the wedding march.

"I don't care," she pouted as she threw herself disconsolately on a divan, to the great danger of her veil: "I'm not going to be unlucky all my life if I can help it. Dear, dear, why didn't I remember it sooner."

"Remember what, dear?" inquired the perplexed bridesmaid.

"Why, that everything I have on is new. I did remember that if

"Married in white,
You have chosen all right,

but I forgot the other:

"Something old and something new,
Or your choice you'll surely rue.

Every stitch I have on is new, and I just will not stir a step until I have something old added to my dress."

"Take my handkerchief," suggested one of the girls.

"What could I do with it?" whined the poor thing. "Brides don't have pockets; neither do they carry handkerchiefs in their hands. It would look as if I expected to cry."

"I have a happy thought," said the bridesmaid. "Exchange shoes with me."

"They won't fit. My feet are two sizes smaller than yours."

"Thanks, awfully. Haven't you a pair of your own Cinderellas?"

"Yes, I have," said the bride, jumping up in a hurry. "Your head is level, dear. Look in the pink box in the chiffonier, or in the blue one. Oh, they won't do, they're so awfully soiled!"

"Get me some bread crumbs and a box of powder," said a practical soul in the party. "Quick! I'll have them white in a jiffy."

"You're just dear," said the grateful bride. "Now I shall feel that I am properly married, and that everything has been done to insure my future happiness. Just one thing more for luck:

"Hurtle a shoe
After me—do."

When the bride descended the stairs leaning on the arm of George Edward, the sweet serenity of her face was a subject of favorable comment. Her friends felt that she was not entering unprepared upon the future awaiting her, and she felt that way herself.—Detroit Free Press.

A DOCTOR'S YARN.

It Is of Two Sisters Who Killed Their Grandfather to Ease His Pain.

This is a bit of a true story a physician told me the other day, and it struck me as being the text for a fascinating story of the Sherlock Holmes sort. We were talking of the advisability of putting hopelessly ill persons out of their misery as soon as possible. Dr. B. didn't believe in it.

"I was asked to do it once," he said. "Two sisters asked me to kill their grandfather, whom I was attending. He was old and could not recover. They seemed simply to pity his pain. I refused. Next morning when I called the man was dead. The nurse told me the sisters had sent her out on an errand. When she returned the windows of the sick room were open. There was a strong odor of chloroform in the room and the man was dead."

"And what did you do?" was asked.

"Nothing. The elder sister is now under the care of a specialist in nervous diseases. She cannot sleep. She will not allow herself to be alone a moment, and she keeps the gas burning in her room all night. I think she will end in a madhouse."

Isn't that a priceless bit for some author's notebook?—Washington Post.

Cruelty.

"Oh, dear," sobbed Mrs. Hunnimunne, "I knew it would come to this, but I didn't expect it so soon."

"Has your husband been mistreating you?" asked her visitor solemnly.

"Y-yes," she sobbed. "He says I want my own way all the time."

"And won't he let you have it?"

"That's the worst of it. He says that he doesn't care if I have my own w-way all the time, b-but that I won't make up my mind wh-what it is."—Washington Star.

A Culinary Earthquake.

Naturally many stories are related of the earthquake.

"I was frying eggs for an early breakfast," said one housewife, "and one side had cooked nicely, when the earthquake came along and just turned those eggs over too nice for anything. And just at the right time too."—Philadelphia Call.

Where the Shoe Pinched.

"Ah, if I could sail through life with you, dear one, by my side, like yonder yacht breasting the brine as she heels to the"—

"But that's just the trouble, Augustus. You aren't well enough heeled, papa says."—New York Recorder.